When the hinge **20** is incorporated in the portable computer **1**, the hub **21** is connected to the computer body **2** by means of the protruding lever arm **24**. The inner shaft **30** is connected to the computer lid **3** by means of the further protruding lever arm **35** and the transverse slot **37**. Hence, the computer lid **3** is able to pivot with respect to the computer body **2**, by virtue of the fact that these components of the computer are connected to the inner shaft **30** and hub **21** respectively, which are able to rotate with respect to one another.

The invention in its broadest aspect is not limited to particular forms of connector mechanisms. A variety of designs of connector mechanisms may be contemplated which are able to provide connection of the outer housing member and inner shaft member to different parts of a casing. In an alternative embodiment, both the inner shaft **30** and the hub **21** are provided with a connector mechanism only in the form of the transverse slot **37**, without making use of any protruding lever arm.

We claim:

1. A hinge device for pivotally connecting first and second parts of a casing, said device comprising:

an outer housing member defining a hollow portion;

an inner shaft member, said inner shaft member being positioned within said hollow portion of said outer housing member in substantial co-axial alignment therewith; and

a non-metallic frictional material fixed to said inner shaft member and disposed thereabout, said frictional material being frictionally and rotatably positioned within said hollow portion of said outer housing member in substantial co-axial alignment therewith;

wherein said outer housing member and said inner shaft member are each adapted for connection to one of said first and second parts of said casing such that rotation of said inner shaft member within said hollow portion causes pivotal motion between said parts with said frictional material providing lower friction at higher rotation speeds and higher friction at lower rotation speeds, said parts being able to be releasably positioned at plural oblique and acute pivotal orientations with respect to one another due to friction between said frictional material and said hollow portion.

2. A hinge device according to claim **1** wherein said inner shaft member defines lateral surfaces, predetermined regions of said lateral surfaces being distanced from said outer housing member by open space therebetween, and other regions of said lateral surfaces being distanced from said outer housing member by said frictional material therebetween.

3. A hinge device according to claim **1** wherein said frictional material is characterised in that it provides higher lubricity when said inner shaft member rotates within said hollow portion of said outer housing member at higher speeds, but provides lower lubricity when the rotation is at lower speeds.

4. A hinge device according to claim **1** wherein said frictional material has a degree of resilience sufficient to allow said frictional material to releasably grip said outer housing member when said inner shaft member is stationary within said hollow portion of said outer housing member.

5. A hinge device according to claim **1** wherein said frictional material is characterized in that it provides higher lubricity when said inner shaft member rotates within said hollow portion of said outer housing member at higher speeds, but provides lower lubricity when the rotation is at lower speeds, and wherein said frictional material has a degree of resilience sufficient to allow said frictional material to releasably grip said outer housing member when said inner shaft member is stationary within said hollow portion of said outer housing member.

6. A hinge device according to claim **1** wherein said inner shaft member is provided with a locking mechanism for locking said frictional material to said inner shaft member such that said frictional material is substantially motionless with respect to said inner shaft member.

7. A hinge device according to claim **1** wherein said frictional material and said inner shaft member are each provided with a locking mechanism configured to mutually engage said frictional material and said inner shaft member which causes said frictional material to be substantially motionless with respect to said inner shaft member.

8. A hinge device according to claim **7** wherein said locking mechanism of said frictional material defines a hollow region shaped so as to allow said locking mechanism of said inner shaft member to fit therethrough.

9. A hinge device according to claim **1** wherein each of said outer housing member and said inner shaft member is provided with a connector mechanism to allow connection of each member to a different one of said first and second parts.

10. A hinge device according to claim **9** wherein said connector mechanism of said outer housing member is in the form of a lever arm that protrudes radially from said outer housing member such that application of a force to the lever arm causes said outer housing member to rotate about its axis.

11. A hinge device according to claim **9** wherein said connector mechanism of said inner shaft member is in the form of a lever arm that protrudes radially from said inner shaft member such that application of a force to the lever arm causes said inner shaft member to rotate about its axis.

12. A hinge device according to claim **9** wherein said connector mechanism comprises a lever arm that is transverse to the rotational axis of the outer housing member such that rotation of said lever arm causes said outer housing member to rotate about its axis.

13. A hinge device according to claim **1** wherein said inner shaft member defines lateral surfaces, predetermined regions of said lateral surfaces being distanced from said outer housing member by space therebetween, and other regions of said lateral surfaces being distanced from said outer housing member by said frictional material therebetween, and wherein said frictional material is disposed so as to be substantially motionless with respect to said inner shaft member as is rotatable with respect to said hollow portion of said outer housing member when said inner shaft member rotates within said hollow portion, and wherein said frictional material has a degree of resilience sufficient to allow said frictional material to releasably grip said outer housing member when said inner shaft member is stationary within said hollow portion of said outer housing member, and wherein said frictional material is characterized in that it provides higher lubricity when said inner shaft member rotates within said hollow portion of said outer housing member at higher speeds, but provides lower lubricity when the rotation is at lower speeds, and wherein said frictional material has a degree of resilience sufficient to allow said frictional material to releasably grip said outer housing member when said inner shaft member is stationary within said hollow portion of said outer housing member, and wherein said inner shaft member is provided with a locking mechanism for locking said frictional material to